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ABSTRACT

Activities for teaching about law in social studies classrooms are presented. Six generalizations have been identified to enable students to conceptualize law and justice and consider the ways in which law and order have been interpreted by different societies at different times in history: (1) society is organized rather than formless, (2) social institutions change when human needs change, (3) a continuous issue in politics is the liberty of the individual versus the authority of the government, (4) a democratic society derives its strength from the effective functioning of the multitude of groups that it contains, (5) each society has empowered a body to make decisions and establish social regulations, and (6) decisions, policies, and laws of society reflect and are based on values, beliefs, and traditions. Based on these generalizations, the activities in Section I help students develop a timeline of the law, analyze brief summaries of various trials throughout history, discuss the universal need for laws and hypothetical situations involving contemporary moral values, and select projects for teaching about laws and justice in different societies. Designed to help students understand legal terminology, activities in Section II include a vocabulary exercise, a word-find, a word game, and a legal codes puzzle. (LH)

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LAW: THE LANGUAGE OF LIBERTY

SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS FOR ALABAMA SOCIAL STUDIES TEACHERS

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PREFACE

These Supplemental Materials Packets for Social Studies teachers are the culmination of a one-year cooperative effort involving the Administrative Office of Courts, the State Department of Education, the Alabama Education Association, and the Alabama Council for School Administration and Supervision.

The packets are being provided in an effort to furnish specific information to teachers and students about Alabama's laws and its system of justice. These materials and activities are not meant to substitute for the established curriculum in any way, but rather, they are intended to enhance it.

The packets may be taken apart so the suitable activities can be duplicated. In order to provide variety, as many ideas as possible have been included. Therefore, it is hoped that teachers will choose only those activities they feel will be appropriate for their students.

In order to help the project staff determine the usefulness of the program, an evaluation sheet has been provided at the end of each packet. Any comments or suggestions made on the evaluation sheet will be greatly appreciated.

Finally, these packets were designed to attain two goals, to provide assistance to teachers and help create a greater respect among young people for the law and its purposes.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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We also wish to thank the following organizations for allowing us to reprint materials which are incorporated in these packets: Constitutional Rights Foundation, Dallas Independent School District, National Center for Law-Focused Education, National Council for Social Studies, North Dakota Department of Public Instruction, and Sears Roebuck Foundation.

Finally, we are grateful to the staff of State Printing and Publications for the specialized work they did and to the Alabama Correctional Industries for the reproduction of these materials.

INTRODUCTION

The seventh grade Social Studies curriculum requires the study of the Eastern Hemisphere. The materials contained in this supplemental packet are based on the philosophical premise that all societies require rules of order. With this basic concept in mind, the inclusion of these suggested activities into teaching units can act as a prelude to a more exact study of Alabama and its rules of order or laws in the eighth and ninth grades.

Specifically, the activities included in this packet have been designed to create the understanding that laws and rules of conduct have always been present in society. Consequently, six generalizations have been identified which shall allow the student to conceptualize law and justice and compare this with the way law and order has been interpreted by different societies at different times in history.

The six generalizations are:

1. Each human being is born into a society which is not formless but organized.

2. Social institutions change when human needs change.

3. A continuous issue in politics is the relationship between the liberty of the individual and the authority of the state or government.

4. A democratic society derives its strength from the effective functioning of the multitude of groups which it contains.

5. Each society has empowered a body (tribunal, council, city council, state assembly, parliament) to make decisions and establish social regulations for the group carrying coercie sanctions (laws).

6. The decisions, policies, and laws that have been made for a given society reflect and are based on the values, beliefs, and traditions of that society.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

SECTION I: SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

Time Line of Law 1
(a class activity)

Trials Throughout History 2
(a student activity)

The Universal Need for Laws/Rules 6
(a student activity)

Law and Morality 7
(a student activity)

Selected Projects Illustrating Law and Justice 8
(a research project)

SECTION II: ACTIVITIES FOR UNDERSTANDING LEGAL TERMS

Vocabulary List 9

Word Find 11

Legal Codes 13
(a word game)

SUGGESTED REFERENCE BOOKS 15

EVALUATION SHEET

TIME LINE OF LAW

TO THE TEACHER

This activity can be used to illustrate the chronological development of law.

PROCEDURE

In a 7th grade social studies class, develop a time line as a year-long activity. One wall of the room can be used for the time line. As the class studies a time in history, add a drawing or statement illustrating the dominant law code. The more colorful and attractive this time line is, the more effective it will be in maintaining student interest.

EXAMPLE

_____ = 1000 years

450 B.C. Twelve Tablets-Roman Law

500's Justinian Code

3000 B.C. 2000 1000 0 1000 2000 A.D.

Code of Hammurabi

1000
English Common Law

Ten Commandments

1215-Magna Charta

509 B.C.
Roman Constitution

1688
English Bill
of Rights

400's
Germanic Law

1945
United Nations
International Law

SECTION I

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

TRIALS THROUGHOUT HISTORY

TO THE TEACHER

The following activity, Trials Throughout History, can be used to illustrate the changing concept of law and to show that individuals have often been at the mercy of authority. The idea of using the trials summarized here, and others you may wish to incorporate, is to compare the contemporary American sense of values and system of justice with more oppressive forms of law from different societies.

PROCEDURE

1. Duplicate as many of the following summaries as you wish and give them to the students to read.

2. Conduct a class discussion of the summarized trials.

3. Following the discussion, you may ask the questions which appear below and have your students answer them orally or in written form.

QUESTIONS

1. How does this trial reflect the rules of the society?

2. Are the rules of this society fair to the individual? What reasons can you give for your answer?

3. Do you feel the general population of the society would have charged the defendant with the crimes the state did?

4. Why do you think the defendant was charged with the particular crimes?

5. The purpose of law is the protection of individual rights and the preservation of order. Which of these purposes do you think this trial served?

6. Should an individual have the right to question the rules/laws of a society?

7. Do you think justice was served in this particular case based on the rules of the society at the time? Was justice served based on the rules of our society? Give reasons for your answers.

TRIALS THROUGHOUT HISTORY

1. Joan of Arc

In the Fifteenth Century, a young girl, Joan of Arc, was caught in the religious/political conflicts of the day. As a leader of French forces, she successfully led the French to victory in several battles. Finally, she was captured and, after much interrogation and a sham trial, was burned at the stake. Some of the charges against her were:

1. Joan of Arc had sinned against the Church by dealing directly with God instead of through the clergy;

2. Joan of Arc wore men's clothing and had her hair cut short; and

3. Joan of Arc had claimed to be directed by God through visions of three saints but could not prove it; therefore, she had blasphemed, or mocked, the Church by telling a lie.

2. Galileo

During the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries while the Church was fighting to maintain its power in Europe, the Inquisition was created as a force of control. One of the duties of the Inquisition was to approve books for publication. Books that differed from church doctrine were not allowed to be published. During this time, a brilliant Italian scientist, Galileo Galilei, developed many new ideas about the earth and the universe and published his theories in a book called Dialogue. The Pope read the book and was furious. He ordered Galileo to Rome and charged him with the following crimes:

1. He had not treated the ideas of Copernicus as theory but had presented them as fact;

2. He had treated the idea of the earth rotating on its axis and revolving around the sun as if it were a possibility (however, the church had already decided that such ideas were false.);

3. He had condemned those who held the opinions of the church; and

4. He wished to convert those who agreed with the church that the earth was the center of the universe to his own beliefs.

3. Nuremberg Trials

Following the rise of Hitler and Nazism in 1933, Germany embarked on a course which would carry the world to the most destructive war in history and would subject a group, European Jews, to a savagery unsurpassed in modern history. Following the war, twenty-four leaders of Nazi Germany were tried. The four conquering nations, the United States, England, France, and the Soviet Union, convened an international tribunal to deal with the defendants. Some of the charges against the defendants were:

1. They had committed crimes against peace including the planning, initiating, and/or waging a war of aggression;

2. They had committed conventional war crimes including violations of the laws or customs governing war; and

3. They had committed crimes against humanity including the murder of at least 5,700,000 people, as well as, the persecution of people due to political, racial, or religious grounds.

4. Cardinal Joseph Mindszenty

After World War II, Europe was divided into two blocs or spheres of influence: the west which was the United States and its allies and the east which was the Soviet Union and its allies. As the Soviets secured their hold on Eastern Europe, some individuals refused to willingly accept their control. One such individual was Cardinal Joseph Mindszenty of Hungary who openly and repeatedly questioned the Soviet domination of his country. Following several threats by the Soviet controlled secret police, Mindszenty was arrested in December, 1948. The police immediately began what was apparently a usual method of questioning political prisoners. He was questioned constantly for three days, being allowed no rest until he finally collapsed. He was also tortured and severely beaten with rubber hoses. Brainwashing was also used, nearly destroying his sanity. Finally, in February, 1949, he was brought to trial and charges with the following:

1. He had protested to the Hungarian premier concerning the founding of a communist republic in Hungary;

2. He had contacts with the former archduke of Hungary in regard to the overthrow of the Communist state; and

3. He had created a list of cabinet officers who were to take charge when the Communists were overthrown.

5. Jomo Kenyatta

For many years, European nations controlled large areas of the world in what was called colonies. The British were the most successful of all people in the establishment of colonies all around the world. One of the British possessions was a territory known as British East Africa; today, it is the country of Kenya. During the 1950's, the Kenyans organized several groups to help them win their freedom from the British. Two of these groups were the Kenya African National Union, which was dedicated to a peaceful settlement of disagreements, and the Mau Mau, a terrorist organization. The leader and founder of KANU was Jomo Kenyatta. Neither the leader, the founder, nor the official organization of Mau Mau was ever proven. Regardless of whether there was proof or not, Jomo Kenyatta was arrested and charged with membership in the Mau Mau, an outlawed organization. Following a trial in which no documents were produced proving charges against him, Kenyatta was convicted and sentenced to seven years hard labor and life detention.

THE UNIVERSAL NEED FOR LAWS/RULES

TO THE TEACHER

This activity can be used to develop the concept that all societies have a need for law and that someone must accept responsibility for developing rules and laws. It can be used, also, to develop the concept that the more advanced a society, the more complicated the legal system.

PROCEDURE

During the study of the listed societies, pose the following questions in the form of a class discussion or ask for written responses.

1. Why does your society need laws/rules?
2. What is your moral basis for laws?
3. How would you make the general population aware of the laws?
4. What are some laws your society needs?
5. How would you enforce law?
6. What form of punishment would you use?

EXAMPLE

You are a free warrior in a Germanic tribe and your chief has been killed in battle. You have been elected Chief. One of your duties is the enforcement of laws/rules.

OTHER SOCIETIES TO CONSIDER

1. Stone Age Tribes
2. Ancient Mesopotamia--Sargon's Empire--Hammurabi's Empire
3. Golden Age Athens--Pericles
4. The Roman Senate during the Republic--The Empire
5. A caliph of the Islamic Empire after the death of Mohammad.

LAW AND MORALITY

TO THE TEACHER

This activity can be used to illustrate the place of individual morality in law. Given the premise that sometimes people do not agree with certain laws, how may an individual react?

PROCEDURE

Students are given a hypothetical situation and are asked to respond based on contemporary moral and legal values as opposed to the values of the time and/or place the event occurred.

Example: Assume you have been appointed by a high-ranking official in the State's church. You are assigned the task of destroying the building of a religious group that is not recognized by the State. Taking into consideration your moral beliefs and your oath to obey Church orders -- what would you do? Give reasons for your decision.

Similar dilemmas can be created for a variety of events or decisions in history. Other examples are:

1. The French Revolution's purge of the nobility.
2. To use or not to use capital punishment in any society.
3. Communist purge of farmers in the Soviet Union during the 1930's.
4. The extermination of Jews in Nazi Europe.
5. An Eighteenth or Nineteenth Century factory owner who needs to hire cheap labor -- should he hire children?
6. A feudal lord.
7. France during the revolution.
8. The leader of an African tribe.
9. A revolutionary leader (communist) of a Third World country.

SELECTED PROJECTS ILLUSTRATING LAW AND JUSTICE

TO THE TEACHER

This activity can be used to teach about law and justice in different societies and to introduce students to basic research.

PROCEDURE

Have the students research one of the following topics about law and justice. You may wish to add topics to the list. The research project should include a short research paper, bibliography, and project illustrating the topic.

EXAMPLES OF TOPICS

1. Instruments of punishment in various societies.
2. The place of women by law in various societies.
3. The place of children by law in various societies.
4. Political cartoons commenting on law and justice in various societies.

SECTION II

ACTIVITIES FOR UNDERSTANDING LEGAL TERMS

VOCABULARY LIST

TO THE TEACHER

This vocabulary list contains some terms associated with law and justice which seventh grade students may encounter. It can be reproduced for their use.

A word game using these terms follows the vocabulary list. This too can be duplicated.

VOCABULARY LIST

7th Grade Political Science

(Law and Justice)

1. court - place where disputes are settled in a fair and equitable manner; judge or judges formally engaged in administering justice.

2. defendant - the person against whom a lawsuit is started or a crime is charged.

3. democracy - government by the people, either directly or through elected representatives.

4. dictator - a ruler with absolute power and authority.

5. evidence - any form of proof legally presented at a trial through witnesses, records, documents.

6. judge - an elected or appointed public official with authority to hear and decide cases in a court of law.

7. jury - specific number of people selected as prescribed by law to render a decision (verdict) in a trial.

8. law - rules and principles of conduct made by the legislature, court decisions, or local customs.

9. monarch - the single or sole ruler of a state; the heredity head of a state.

10. oath - written or oral pledge by a person to keep a promise to speak the truth.

11. prosecution - act of pursuing a lawsuit or criminal trial; the party initiating a criminal suit such as the State of Alabama.

12. prosecutor - public official (district attorney) who performs the function of trial lawyer representing the state.

13. republic - a state or nation in which the supreme power rests in all the citizens entitled to vote; power is exercised by representatives elected, directly or indirectly, by citizens and responsible to them.

14. trial - examination of issues of fact and law in a suit before a court that has jurisdiction over the case.

15. tyrant - an absolute ruler; a cruel, oppressive ruler; despot.

16. witness - person who testifies before a court under oath regarding what he has seen, heard, or otherwise observed.

WORD FIND

Law and Justice Related Terms

The words at the bottom of the page appear in this puzzle. They can be read either across or down the page.

Directions: Draw a circle around each word in the puzzle.

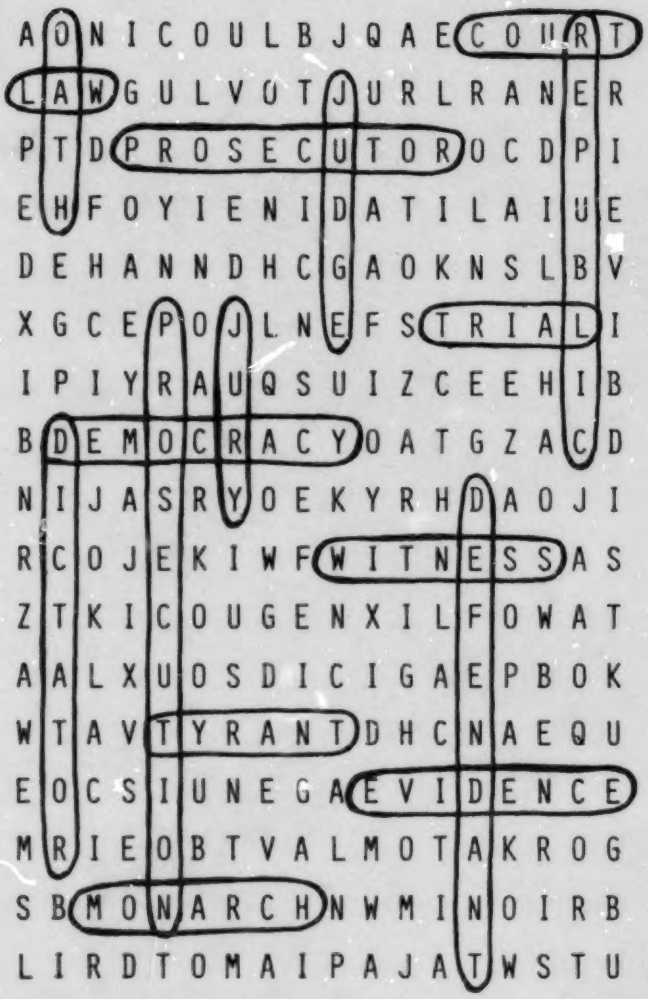
A O N I C O U L B J Q A E C O U R T
L A W G U L V C T J U R L R A N E R
P T D P R O S E C U T O R O C D P I
E H F O Y I E N I D A T I L A I U E
D E H A N N D H C G A O K N S L B V
X G C E P O J L N E F S T R I A L I
I P I Y R A U Q S U I Z C E E H I B
B D E M O C R A C Y O A T G Z A C D
N I J A S R Y O E K Y R H D A O J I
R C O J E K I W F W I T N E S S A S
Z T K I C O U G E N X I L F O W A T
A A L X U O S D I C I G A E P B O K
W T A V T Y R A N T D H C N A E Q U
E O C S I U N E G A E V I D E N C E
M R I E O B T V A L M O T A K R O G
S B M O N A R C H N W M I N O I R B
L I R D T O M A I P A J A T W S T U

court
defendant
democracy
dictator
evidence
judge
jury
law
monarch
oath
prosecution
prosecutor
republic
trial
tyrant
witness

WORD FIND

Law and Justice Related Terms

ANSWER KEY


A O N I C O U L B J Q A E C O U R T
L A W G U L V O T J U R L R A N E R
P T D P R O S E C U T O R O C D P I
E H F O Y I E N I D A T I L A I U E
D E H A N N D H C G A O K N S L B V
X G C E P O J L N E F S T R I A L I
I P I Y R A U Q S U I Z C E E H I B
B D E M O C R A C Y O A T G Z A C D
N I J A S R Y O E K Y R H D A O J I
R C O J E K I W F W I T N E S S A S
Z T K I C O U G E N X I L F O W A T
A A L X U O S D I C I G A E P B O K
W T A V T Y R A N T D H C N A E Q U
E O C S I U N E G A E V I D E N C E
M R I E O B T V A L M O T A K R O G
S B M O N A R C H N W M I N O I R B
L I R D T O M A I P A J A T W S T U

LEGAL CODES

WORD GAME

TO THE TEACHER

This activity can be used as review of the development of legal codes.

PROCEDURE

Distribute copies of the Word Game, Legal Codes, and have students fill in the blanks in each section.

EXTENDED ACTIVITY

Lead a class discussion of the various legal codes.

Answer Key

1. I S L A M I C
2. T E N C O M M A N D M E N T S
3. M A G N A C A R T A
4. H A M M U R A B I
5. P E R I C L E S
6. C O N S T I T U T I O N
7. C O M M O N L A W
8. F E U D A L
9. T E N T A B L E S

LEGAL CODES

Directions: Fill in the puzzle according to the type of laws described below.

1. _ _ L _ _ _ _
2. _ E _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
3. _ _ G _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
4. _ A _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
5. _ _ _ _ _ L _ _
6. C _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
7. _ O _ _ _ _ _ _ _
8. _ _ _ D _ _
9. _ E _ _ _ _ _ _ _
10. _ _ S _ _ _ _ _ _

1. The laws in most Moslem nations are part of the _____ codes of law and morality.
2. The laws given to Moses by God are called the Decalogue, or _____.
3. King John surrendered some of the English King's powers to his nobles when he signed the _____ _____.
4. _____ gave the ancient Babylonians a written law code.
5. _____ led the democracy in ancient Athens during the Golden Age.
6. The U.S. government was organized in 1789 in the _____, our basic law and plan of government.
7. The English after William the Conqueror developed a system of law that was used throughout England known as the _____.
8. Trial by ordeal and trial by combat were used during the Middle ages by _____ lords.
9. Rome's ancient laws, written on stone tablets, were called the _____ _____.
10. _____, a Byzantine emperor, rewrote and recodifide Roman law during the Empire.

SUGGESTED REFERENCE BOOKS

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EVALUATION SHEET

Grade 7

To determine the usefulness of this Supplemental Materials Packet, the teacher is requested to answer and return this questionnaire. Your comments will be greatly appreciated.

1. What is your evaluation of this Packet?
   ( ) Excellent ( ) Above Average ( ) Average ( ) Poor

2. Does this Packet contain useful information?
   ( ) yes ( ) no

3. Does this Packet provide helpful suggestions and activities?
   ( ) yes ( ) no

4. Can the information and activities in this Packet easily be incorporated into your existing curriculum?
   ( ) yes ( ) no

5. How can this Packet be improved? (please specify, e.g. structure/organization, content/coverage, writing style, other). Use additional sheet.

6. If you have specific information/suggestions/activities that you feel would benefit other teachers, please attach to this evaluation sheet.

7. Please complete:

   Name: _____(optional)

   School: _____

   School Address: _____

   _____

   Telephone: ( ) _____

   Grades Taught: _____

   Years Taught: _____

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